

To: Connecticut General Assembly Committee on the Environment  
From: Christine O'Neill  
Date: March 7, 2023  
Re: **In Opposition to SB 1148**

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Honorable Committee Members:

I write to you today as a Connecticut resident of 9 June Street, Wolcott, representing only myself. I hold a master's degree in Energy and Environmental Management and I work as an Environmental Planner.

I strongly oppose SB 1148, "AN ACT AUTHORIZING CERTAIN KILLING AND HUNTING OF BLACK BEAR." My testimony echoes that submitted by the members of CT Votes for Animals.

Imagine, for a moment, if I took over your home without consulting you and confined you only to your bathroom. Some of your needs can be met in that room, but occasionally you would need to wander into the kitchen because you need food, or into the bedroom to get a good night's sleep. Now, imagine if my reaction to you simply existing in spaces that used to be yours was to shoot you on sight... *after* I took over your home and put you in a virtually unlivable situation in the first place.

Black bears do not deserve death because they are behaving as they always have and seeking out food. Humans are the ones who created this problem by eliminating enormous swaths of habitat and then tempting bears back with crops, livestock, and trash. Furthermore, a hunt occurring deep in the woods is not going to deal with the issue of bears creeping into suburbs.

I own two small pets and I am not afraid of bears, because I use common sense measures to keep my girls safe. Humans, domesticated animals, and wild animals do not need to be at odds.

A much simpler solution is to remove the attractants that actually create this issue. This can include using bear proof trash cans, removing bird feeders during peak times of the year and protecting beehives, chickens, and crops with electric barriers. CT residents want humane resolutions to conflict with wildlife. There are well proven solutions that focus on community-based attractant removal and public education. Please support these proven strategies and oppose the bear hunt in SB 1148.

**Make no mistake: this is a human problem. Not a bear problem.**

Thank you for your time.

All my best,

**Christine O'Neill**  
9 June Street  
Wolcott, CT